

URBAN CORRIDORS PLAN

Phase I Report

Houston, Texas

January 2007



Prepared by:

Citiventure Associates LLC
Center for Transit Oriented Development
Van Meter Williams Pollack

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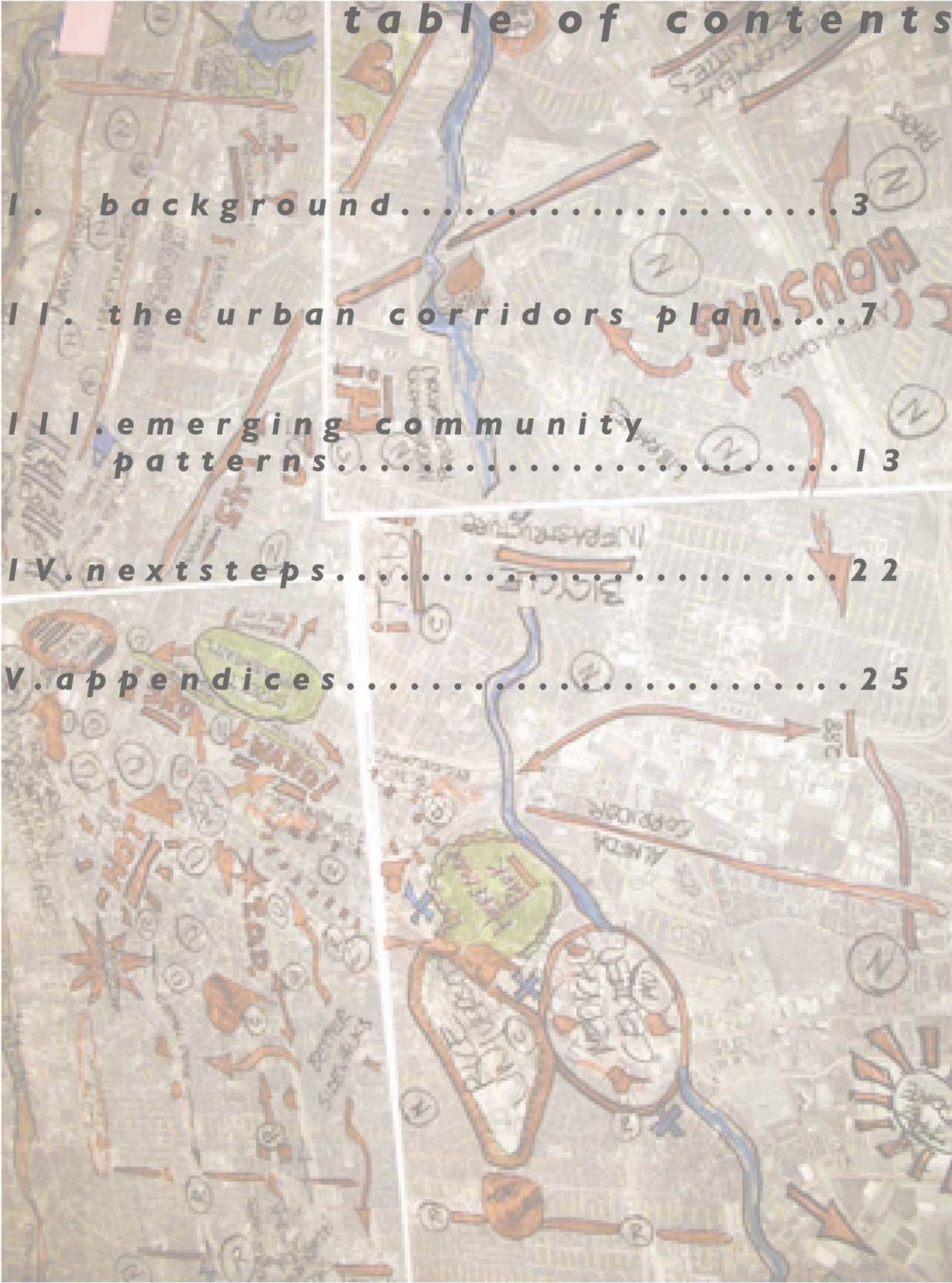


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l . b a c k g r o u n d

In June 2006, the City of Houston launched the Urban Corridor Planning process, an initiative to identify the community's vision for neighborhoods along existing and proposed transit corridors. Over the next 10 years, the Metropolitan Transit Authority (METRO) will be investing \$2 billion in transit facilities, including five fixed guide way corridors within the urban core. It is in the City's interest to ensure that anticipated future development in these corridors is compatible with the transit and optimizes mobility, livability, and economic success for citizens and businesses. The Urban Corridors process will create a planning framework that accomplishes this objective.

The Context

Houston is a rapidly growing city. The eight-county region is projected to experience a population increase in the next 30 years of more than 3.5 million people, of which 2 million will be in Harris County. This would be equivalent of adding a second Houston to Harris County in the next 30 years. This growth accounts for an additional 835,000 households and more than 1 million new jobs. Total population will reach 8,835,000 in the region; with 5,840,000 in Harris County alone.

Urban areas along high-capacity transit corridors have the potential to absorb some of this regional growth. With so much growth, mobility could be seriously compromised if residents, business customers and employees, and visitors choose to drive for almost every trip. The challenge is to shape the growth patterns so that alternative modes such as transit, walking and bicycling become safe, convenient and attractive transportation options while improving the quality of life for current and future residents.

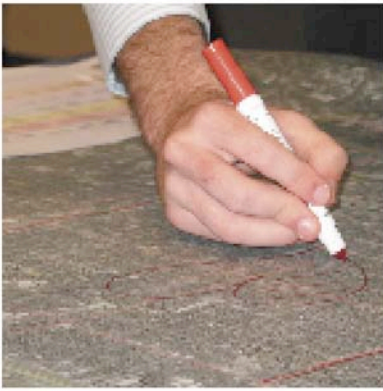
The Opportunity

Across America, cities are grappling with growth, change, livability and economic resilience.

- Demographics are shifting in metro areas - only 22% of households are married couples with children; the population is aging; and single households are becoming a much larger share of the population.
- Median transportation costs now exceed housing costs for families in a growing number of cities—including Houston. The length and unpredictability of commute times is leading to broad based interest in transportation alternatives, and demand for more transit, cycling and walking options.
- Jobs now follow employees rather than employees following jobs. People want choices – in housing, transportation, work and play.

As a result, consumer preferences for lifestyle, home location, and transportation are changing. Market demand is increasing for compact, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods that have an enhanced sense of community as compared to suburbs. These concepts have been particularly successful when organized around transit stations. Surveys have indicated that over 30% of the population is interested in more compact, walkable housing near transit. Property values in such places routinely realize a 15-20% premium; the environment benefits from lower emissions and less consumption of undeveloped land – maximizing usage of public infrastructure investment.





To be competitive nationally, Houston increasingly faces a need to offer more choices for community and the highest possible quality of life. METRO's ambitious investment in Houston's established neighborhoods presents an immediate opportunity to provide these choices while addressing some of the challenges such as - vast amount of undeveloped land, decline and disrepair; protecting the treasures that make the city unique, and creating more mobility options.





11. the urban corridor plan

METRO's transit investments in Houston's diverse neighborhoods could bring a significant improvement in mobility and quality of life – if market forces are balanced with neighborhoods' long-term vision; and if public and private sector investment are coordinated and leveraged for maximum benefit to the community. This will need a fresh look at the way decisions are made about public investments and how to involve the community in those decisions. Thus, the Urban Corridors' Planning process has been defined as an opportunity to think holistically about the future of the city through a process that is inclusive, integrated and accountable.

To address this need, Mayor Bill White authorized the Planning and Development Department and Planning Commission to initiate the Urban Corridors planning process in June 2006.

This process allows citizens to influence the future of their growing community by asking basic questions: What should change, and what should stay the same? What are the city's treasures? What needs greater attention? What areas need investment and what kind should it be? What will make the city competitive economically, protect the rich heritage, and enhance the quality of life? How should people get around, and what choices need to be added?

The outcome of the process will be a policy framework to encourage new private development and public infrastructure to produce a more walkable and attractive urban environment that reflects community desires. The City will formulate public infrastructure standards, urban design guidelines, and development ordinances that would be recommended to City Council for adoption. These tools would help the City guide its own investments in the transit corridors, shape private investments, and protect neighborhoods as well.

METRO's accelerated implementation schedule and approach of using design-build-operate-maintain contracts with private sector facility providers highlighted the need for the City to quickly move the Urban Corridors planning process along.

The City's initial step was to convene the Urban Corridors Steering Committee comprised of several representatives from existing leadership groups along all the lines. Since June, the Steering Committee has met almost every week. At the same time, the Planning Commission structured several committees of representative citizens and business interests to address issues related to urban growth and mobility.

The Planning Commission subcommittee on Mixed Use / Transit-Oriented Development was charged with tracking the Urban Corridors Project and has been regularly briefed on the issues and progress.

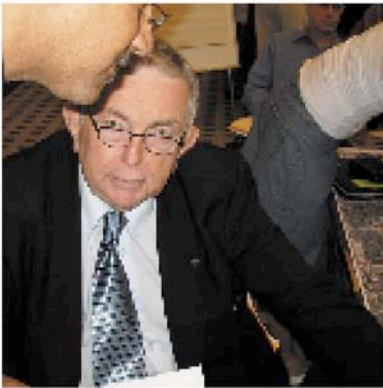




The Steering Committee Process

The Steering Committee's first assignment was to set clear, specific objectives to guide and evaluate the process. The following list was established based on the underlying assumption that the goal is to help the community capitalize on METRO's investment, not influence decision making on the alignments.

1. Empower stakeholders to envision and influence the future of their neighborhoods—be they residential, commercial, or a mix of both- in the face of Houston's projected growth
2. Educate the community on the relationship between neighborhood stabilization and revitalization, redevelopment and public infrastructure
3. Excite the community about the positive opportunities associated with walking, cycling and transit
4. Establish support for future ordinances and guidelines to revitalize urban corridors and create pedestrian and bicycle friendly places
5. Initiate the urban corridors planning process, starting with METRO's transit corridors
6. Generate plans, ordinances, standards and incentives that help produce the type of communities envisioned by the citizens. Do not address land use per se, but shape the character of public realm and the way the private development interacts with it.
7. Demonstrate the ability to plan accountably, meet schedules and create certainty for the development community



Timelines and requirements for the process would have to be coordinated between METRO, the Houston Planning and Development Department, Public Works and Engineering Department, and the Urban Corridor Steering Committee. A master flowchart showing the relationships between the various processes (See Appendix) became the powerful tool that helped formulate the approach.

Ultimately, the work program was organized into three phases:

Phase I framed the overall effort, convened a community-wide steering committee that met every week for two months, and held a community-wide workshop on August 26th, attended by 240 citizens plus 50 volunteers. The results of Phase I are the subject of this report.

Phase II & III will build on Phase I, commence in November 2006, and will produce individual plans and implementation framework for each of the corridors based on on-going community engagement and dialogue. Each plan will address land development, mobility, public spaces' design and other community priorities. These will result in specific public policy recommendations as well as modification to City ordinances and standards. Phase II & III will be jointly funded by METRO, City, and Main Street Coalition.



Steering Committee Deliberations

In the course of setting objectives, framing a work program and organizing the community workshop, the Steering Committee had very long, serious conversations about the stresses and needs of the Houston community in the face of growth and change. The first item of concern was how to differentiate the specific transit alignment processes being led by METRO from the broader neighborhood visioning and planning represented by the City's effort. Ultimately it was decided that alignment decisions coming from the METRO process would be respected and would be treated as existing transportation infrastructure in the Urban Corridors plans. Some were concerned that it was too late to change the physical and psychological landscape of the community, others disagreed, and in the end, all were excited about the opportunity to make a difference and shape the community for the future.

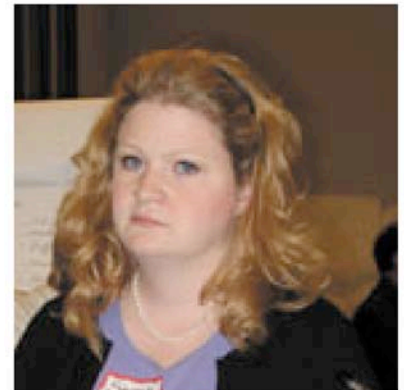
Some of the topics discussed over the hours and the weeks are highlighted here:

- The importance of creating an inclusive, transparent, and clearly accountable community process
- Short term vs. long-term decisions and strategies
- How to protect the treasured, stable neighborhoods
- How to decide what to save and what to change
- The community's fear of change and unfamiliarity with transit
- Houston's dearth of local models of walkable, compact mixed-use places
- The importance of including business and developer participants as well as neighborhood activists
- The transformation that can come from simply improving streets with sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, bike lanes, etc.
- The race against time as the City grows and develops without a clear vision, guidelines and incentives
- The competition between cities for jobs, investment, workers, and Houston's need to invest in better "quality of life" amenities
- The importance of mobility alternatives to address congestion as Houston grows minimize disruption and keep businesses healthy.

Early on, the Steering Committee decided it was important to notify the community of the process and involve them as quickly as possible in framing the issues. They scheduled a half-day workshop that would include both educational presentations and hands-on work sessions with the attendees. The goal for the session was to stimulate conversation about the future of Houston's urban neighborhoods, to establish key priorities, to determine the important features to keep or change, and to imagine how Houston should look and feel in the future.

The Phase I Community Workshop

The Community Workshop took place on Saturday August 26, 2006 at the George R. Brown Convention Center. Open to the public, invitations were sent out to as broad an audience as possible. Steering committee members augmented City mailing lists with personal contacts and calls, City council members were asked to email constituents in the corridor study areas. Newspaper





articles and media public service announcements were used to reach businesses, residents, property owners and interested parties. Parking, registration and lunch were provided free of charge to attendees. Over 240 participants and about 50 volunteers attended.

The workshop began with opening comments from Planning and Development Director Marlene Gafrick on the inevitability of coming growth and the resultant challenges Houston faces. Planning Commission Chair Dr. Carol Lewis then described the Urban Corridors purpose and process. This was followed by a power point presentation on national urban trends and strategies to build competitive, successful cities presented by project consultants Marilee Utter and Tim Van Meter.



The presentations highlighted the profound demographic changes across the country, and their impact on cities. Aging, immigration, rising costs (time and money) of commuting, technology impacts, the move back to cities, sustainable communities, concerns about wellness and health, and demand for amenities are converging in trends for walkable neighborhoods, new housing choices and transportation alternatives. When delivered, quality of life improves dramatically and economic benefits to property owners and cities alike are irrefutable. In order to be competitive in the next generation, cities are going to have to deliver these special "places", and districts around transit stations offer a powerful opportunity. But creating these destination areas is not easy and will not happen without clear intention and will. The public realm is the first and most important element—how streets are designed makes a world of difference. Then requiring simple guidelines in the private development—where buildings sit on the block, how parking is handled, the street level experience for pedestrians—can positively transform otherwise non-descript or undesirable neighborhoods. To be successful, public private partnerships are essential. There are clear and essential roles for the public sector, the private sector and the not-for-profit sector to play in becoming champions for great cities. The cities that will thrive in the next decade live by Doug Porter's guiding principles: 1) Choices 2) Connections 3) Collaborations. (See Appendix 2 for copies of presentation.)

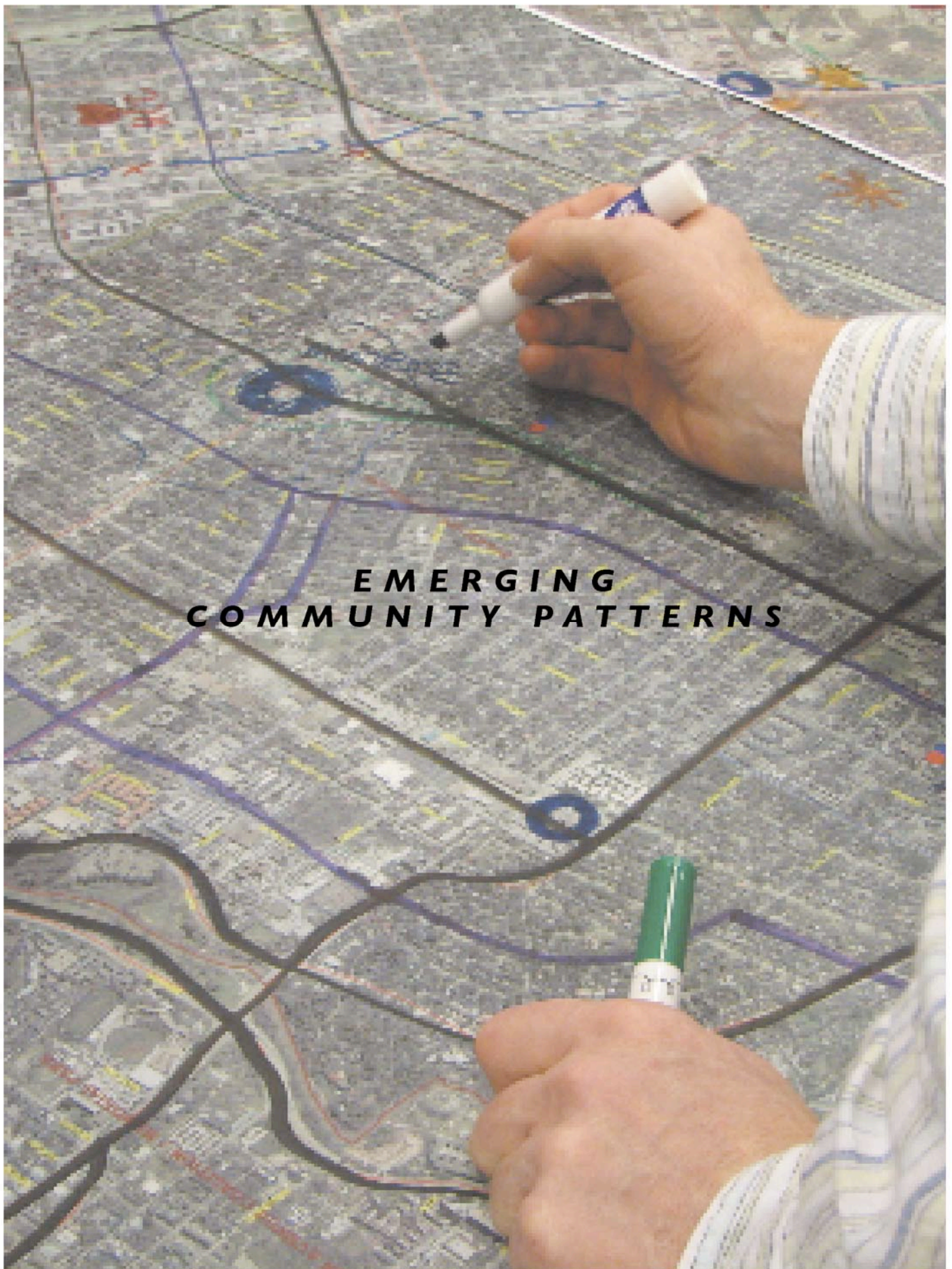


For the purposes of the participatory portion of the workshop that followed the presentations, Houston's inner core (mostly within the IH 610 loop) had been divided up into three large areas A, B & C. At registration, each attendee selected one of the three areas for participation and was assigned to a table workgroup. Ultimately there were 17 table workgroups (5 of Area A, 7 of Area B, 5 of Area C) comprised of 12 to 15 participants each.

Each workgroup was staffed by volunteer facilitators, designers and recorders. Each table was covered with a map approximately 4 feet by 6 feet in size that covered several square miles of the city, corresponding to the group's chosen area. Groups had approximately two hours to consider that area in light of community infrastructure and livability issues. Maps were diagrammed to reflect group concerns, comments were captured on flip charts by recorders, and each group summarized three primary concerns/comments. Volunteers were also given comment cards to submit if they had additional input. The large group then reconvened and a selected volunteer from each worktable reported back the top issues in their group. (Maps, flip chart notes and final Report Back notes are attached as appendices.)



Following the formal session, the volunteers debriefed on the session particulars. Their observations included the very high energy in the working groups and enthusiasm for the process, the surprising amount of congruence among diverse group members on how to make Houston more livable, and the desire of participants to get to the Phase II work at a smaller, neighborhood scale.



**EMERGING
COMMUNITY PATTERNS**

111. emerging community patterns.

The discussions of the Steering Committee and the recommendations from the Community Workshop reflected very similar issues. The actual workshop maps and detailed notes are attached as appendices, with the findings of both merged into eight broad community patterns highlighted below. The topics are hierarchically ordered by number of times they appeared in each of the corridor workshop table's top three talking points and then how prevalent they were in each individual tables comments. Specific community comments from the workshop are paraphrased or quoted and noted by table number.

I. Create a Connected Multimodal Network and Provide Alternate Transportation Options.

Houston & the Automobile- Community Concerns

- o Existing traffic congestion and future growth patterns (A3/A4/C5)
- o Limit Freeway expansion (A1/A4/B2/C4)
- o Noise from freeways (A3)
- o Unsafe streets due to speed of cars, lack of buffering and lack of safe pedestrian friendly sidewalks (A1-A3/B5/B7/C1)
- o Mobility options for population that does not drive (C5)

More Transit Options

- o Invest in an integrated, efficient alternative transit network of light rail, commuter rail, buses, pedestrian streets, interconnected bicycle ways and auto connections (park-n-rides and kiss-n-rides). (A1/A4/B1/C1/C2/C5)
- o "Less focus on cars, instead focus on other forms of transportation" (B6/C5)
- o Increase mobility (C1/C5)
- o Good dependable accessible public transportation that is clean, safe, pleasant, easy to use, well maintained and operates frequently at all hours to enable and support the needs of a twenty four hour city. (B4/B7)

Increase Connectivity

- o Increase connectivity between existing treasures, major destinations, home and work, urban & suburban areas, activity nodes, outdoor destinations, urban neighborhoods, natural corridors, transit centers (including the airport) through an intermodal network that includes streets, mass transit, and a complete, interconnected system of walking and bike trails. (A1-A4/ B4/ B5/ B7/ C1-C5)
- o "Mobility network must connect to activity nodes and natural corridors / places" (B5)
- o "Transit available to all with key connectivity – better unified system" (C5)

Pedestrian & Bicycle Friendly Streets & Corridors (A1-A4/ B5-B7/ C1-C5)

- o Community suggested pedestrian friendly street improvements
 - Narrow streets "Narrow neighborhood streets are a treasure" (A1/ C4)
 - Buffering sidewalk with trees and street parking (A3/ A4)
 - Make streets walkable and safe with streetscape improvements including landscaping/ trees/ curbs/ safe street crossings/ (A3/A4/ B5)
 - "Walkable Community/ Neighborhood" (B5/ B7)
 - Accessible, pedestrian friendly sidewalks with street level retail along urban streets/ make streets "a place" (B5/ C2)
 - Pedestrian-oriented development (C4)
 - Current sidewalk conditions are "too narrow", poorly lit, dangerous to pedestrians and cyclists, poorly maintained, lacking any buffer to fast moving cars, missing shade, ugly, and too frequently dangerous to cross. Transit workshop participants emphasized the importance of implementing street standards that transform existing "ditches and lack of sidewalks" along roadways with fast moving traffic and unsafe crosswalks into pleasant environments that encourage pedestrian and





bicycle activity. (A1-A5/ B1/ B4/ B6/B7/ C1-C5)

- More great beautiful streets and boulevards that serve both the car and the pedestrian and re-link neighborhoods and communities (B4/ B6/ C4)

o **Bicycle friendly policies and amenities**

- Suggested strategies to encourage bicycle use include connecting existing bicycle and pedestrian ways, installing secure racks for locking up bikes at transit stops, allowing bikes on transit, bike racks on buses, and showers at stations to clean up before work. (A1-A5/ B1/ B4/ B6/B7/ C1-C5)

Collaborative community process (Consultant comment with comments from table A5/ C3)

While the workshop atmosphere was decidedly pro-transit, concern was expressed regarding the methodology of weaving transit infrastructure into the urban fabric of the city in a thoughtful manner that includes community input.



2. Protect the unique character of existing stable neighborhoods and preservation of historic buildings, homes, landmarks and community treasures. (A3/ A4/ B1/B2/B3/B5/B7/C1/C3/ C4/C5)

3. Develop Urban Standards and Ordinances that enable, encourage and allow urban development (C4/ A4/B3/C1)

o Development Guidelines –development, implementation and enforcement of higher development standards through City policy and regulation (B6/ A4/ B7/ C3/C4)

o Development guidelines that are specific to different area types (C4/ B6)

o "Policy that coherently guides development within the public realm that provides tools to focus development along the major corridors, and that through transit supports and connects on urban centers" (B3)

o "Build commercial buildings to street front, reconsider set-back ordinance" (C4/C1/ A4/ B7)

o Ordinances that balance density around urban centers, neighborhood centers and transit corridors (A1/ A4/ C5)

o Pedestrian street standards (A4/ B7/C2/C4)

o Improve sign regulations (B7/ C2/ A4/ B1/ B7/ C4)

o Regulations that require utilities and power lines to be buried (B7/ C2/ A4/ B3/ C4)

o Updated parking standards that respond to urban condition (A1/ A3/ A4/ B1/ C4)

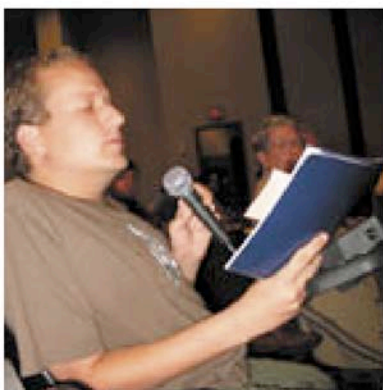
- "Parking should be expensive" (B1)

o Stronger Historic Preservation Ordinance (A3/ B7/ C3/ C4/ C5)

o Create more parks and green spaces through incentives and regulations (A4/ C3)

o Comprehensive Plan - Sector planning with zoning and land use regulations (B7/ C3/ C4/ C5)

o Tax incentives for mixed income housing, transit oriented development, affordable housing (B7/ C4/ B1/B3)



4. Create Neighborhood Centers and great “places”

Consultant Analysis: The need for many and various great “places” is a thread that ran throughout the conversations of the Steering Committee and the workshop participants alike. Specific issues relative to place making fell into five distinct categories with additional workshop comments below:

- o burying infrastructure (see comments above)
- o multimodal connectivity (see comments above)
- o more green spaces (see comments below in parks & green space)
- o pedestrian and bike friendly streets (see comments above)

5. Pedestrian-friendly destination places / neighborhood serving amenities and neighborhood centers

Pedestrian and bike friendly streets (see comments above)

- o See above comments for street standards, connectivity, pedestrian and bicycle friendly streets and preservation and improvement of “places” and “treasures” as they relate to place making. (A1-A4/ B2-B7/ C1-C5)

Pedestrian-friendly destination, neighborhood serving amenities and neighborhood centers

- o Make Houston an international city by preserving existing and creating more “destinations” that include gathering spaces, parks, open space, neighborhood centers, urban centers and public art including gateways, statues, and galleries. (A1/ A2/ A4/ B2/ B4/ B6/ B7/ C1/ C3/ C4/ C5)
- o “Create place along transit – not just throughways – by making sidewalks accessible and pedestrian friendly and requiring street level retail in urban centers.” (C2)
- o Current neighborhoods and residential redevelopment is VERY underserved by neighborhood amenities including; retail, restaurants, cafes (with outdoor seating and awnings) grocery stores, employment, educational options, amenities, community centers, churches, community services, social services, youth programs, parks, open space, civic uses like libraries and the pleasant pedestrian oriented sidewalks necessary to link a residential neighborhood to these amenities. (A1/ A4/ B2/ B7/C4/ C5)
- o More mixed- use neighborhood centers that create a village character with “Main Streets” and neighborhood/retail place types that reinforce the many special neighborhoods within the city. (A1/ A2/ A4/ B2/ B4/ B6/ B7/ C1/ C3/ C4/ C5)





5. Preserve and expand Parks, Open Space, Green Space Corridors and Trail Connections

- o More Parks of all kinds, Open Space, Green Space Corridors & Trail Connections throughout Houston serving all neighborhoods (A3/ A4/ B2/ B7/ C1/ C4/ C3)
- o Preserve and improve amenities, access and connectivity to existing parks, trails and open space. (A3/ A4/ B2/ B7/ C1/ C4/ C3/ B5)
- o More green spaces with native plants (B2)
- o Green space and gardens in unused right of ways and easements, more rail to trail conversions (A4)

Preserve Bayous and return them to a more natural state for recreation and flood control (B4/ B6/ A3/ A4/ B2/ C1/ A1/ A3)

Better protect old growth trees, enable more beautiful tree lined streets and more trees throughout Houston. (B6/ B7/ C3/ A3/ B4/ B7)



6. Encourage and support more urban infill development

Consultant Analysis: Urban infill and redevelopment is the economic use of vacant land in urban areas where water, sewer and other public services are already in place. Urban infill development revitalizes underutilized and vacant urban land and invigorates blighted city streets.

- o Vacant parking lots, big box suburban-type developments, dying strip centers, dying malls, abandoned businesses, vacant property, dilapidated buildings, old industrial areas (along bayou), blighted neighborhoods and thoroughfares are excellent, often-overlooked opportunities for infill development that could be rewoven into the city fabric as economic mixed-use districts. (A1/ A4/ B2/ B3/ B7/ C1/ C2/ C4/ C5)
- o Urban infill development is especially valuable when located in transit districts and should be prioritized for redevelopment. (B4/ C1/ C3/ C4/ C5)
- o Urban infill should be concentrated inside the Loop (B6)
- o Urban infill projects should be built to urban standards NOT suburban standards (C3/ C4/ C5)



7. Make new development sustainable

Consultant analysis: Sustainable development is that which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

- o Sustainability needs to be considered in all new projects, infrastructure life cycle, pedestrian friendly design, landscaping, flooding, housing durability, and drainage-permeable surfaces. (B5)

Mitigate the environmental effects of development and growth (A2)

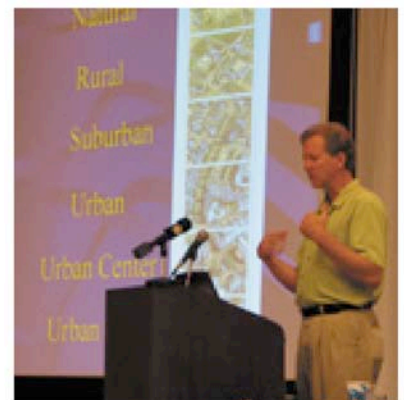
- o Flood mitigation through use of permeable materials and increased green space (A1/ B2/ B5/ C3/ C4/ C5/ A4)
- o Consideration and improvement of air quality issues from traffic congestion (B5/ A1/ A4)

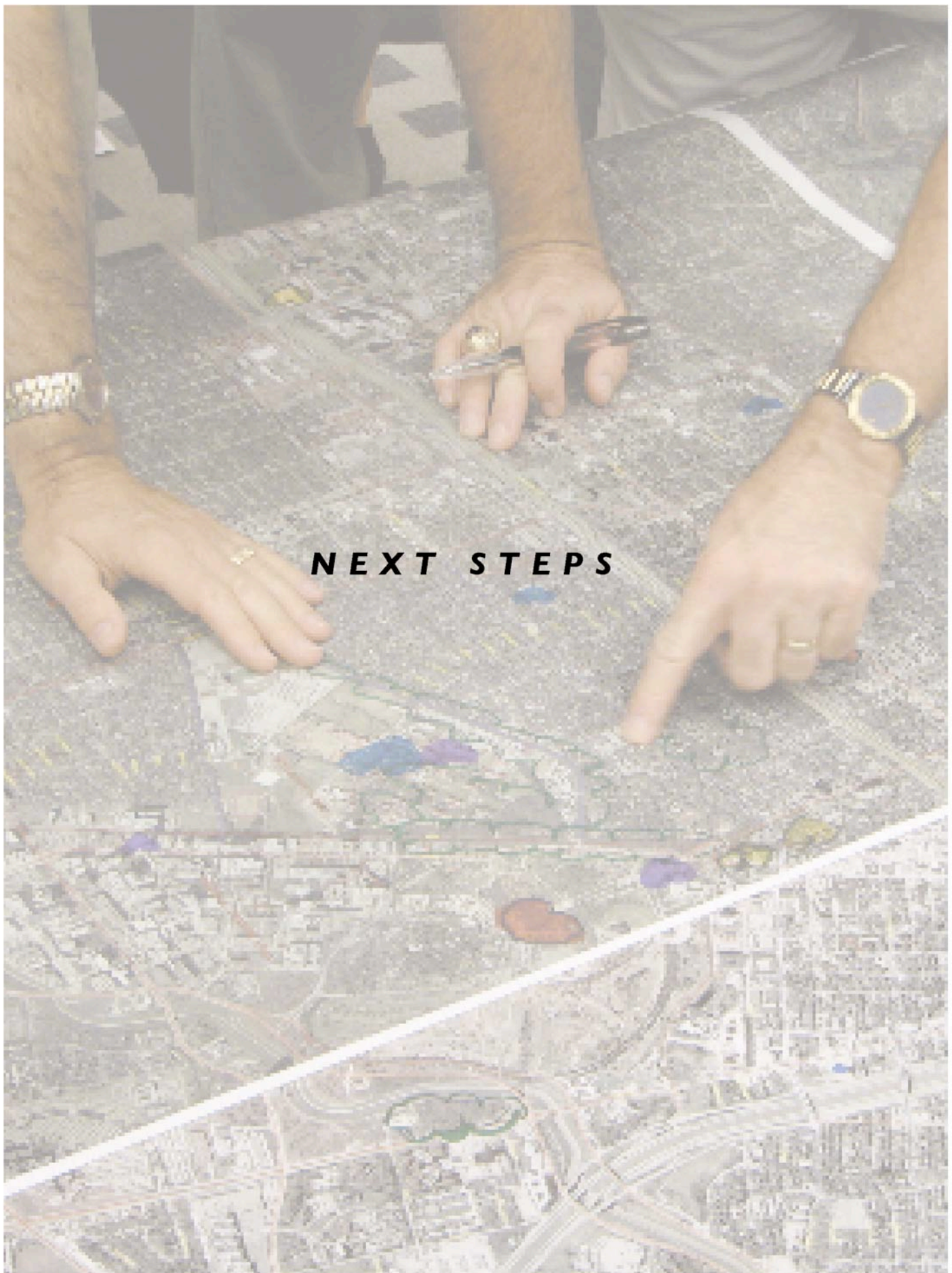


- o Protect clean water from polluted run off (A2)
- o Minimize transportation costs and energy use through enhanced public transit corridors (C1)
- o Brownfield remediation (A4)

8. Provide affordable housing in mixed-income neighborhoods

- o Insure inter-generational, socio-economic diverse neighborhoods based on a variety of housing options (including permanently affordable housing both for sale and rent) (B7/ A1/ A3/ C4/ A4/ B4/ B7/ C1/ C3)
- o Challenges of gentrification and displacement must be addressed by each neighborhood. (B2/ A1/ C3/ C4)
- o The City should formulate a comprehensive strategy for mixed-income and workforce housing (C4)
- o Locate affordable mixed income housing near transit (B2/ C5/ C5/ B7)





IV. next steps

Phase I was the important kick-off of the overall process, but no decisions have been made at this point. Phase II will pick up where Phase I ended, and will more specifically address neighborhood character and design, including the public realm. In anticipation of METRO's rigorous schedule, Phase II will require an expedited process.

Urban Corridor Plans are important tools for many audiences. They will provide the community vision and decision-making roadmap for how each neighborhood will deal with the inevitable growth and change Houston faces in the next decade. The guidelines and ordinances that result from the Corridor process will provide first-time assurances to residents and investors alike about the character and quality of their neighborhoods.

To deliver on this goal, the hallmarks of this effort must remain:

- Broad outreach and inclusively
- Transparent, accountable processes
- Clear communication
- Partnerships
- Timely processes
- Tangible results.



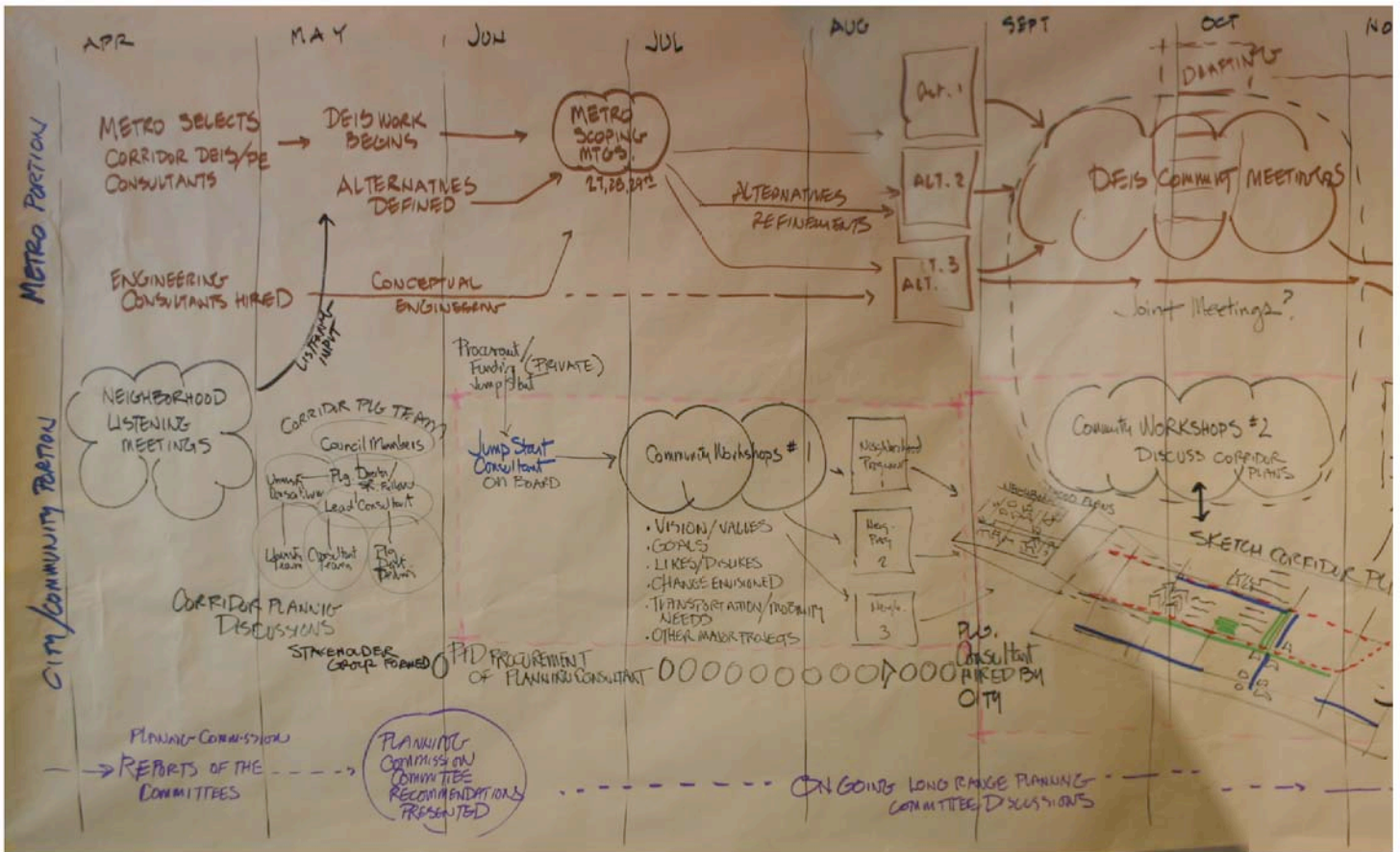


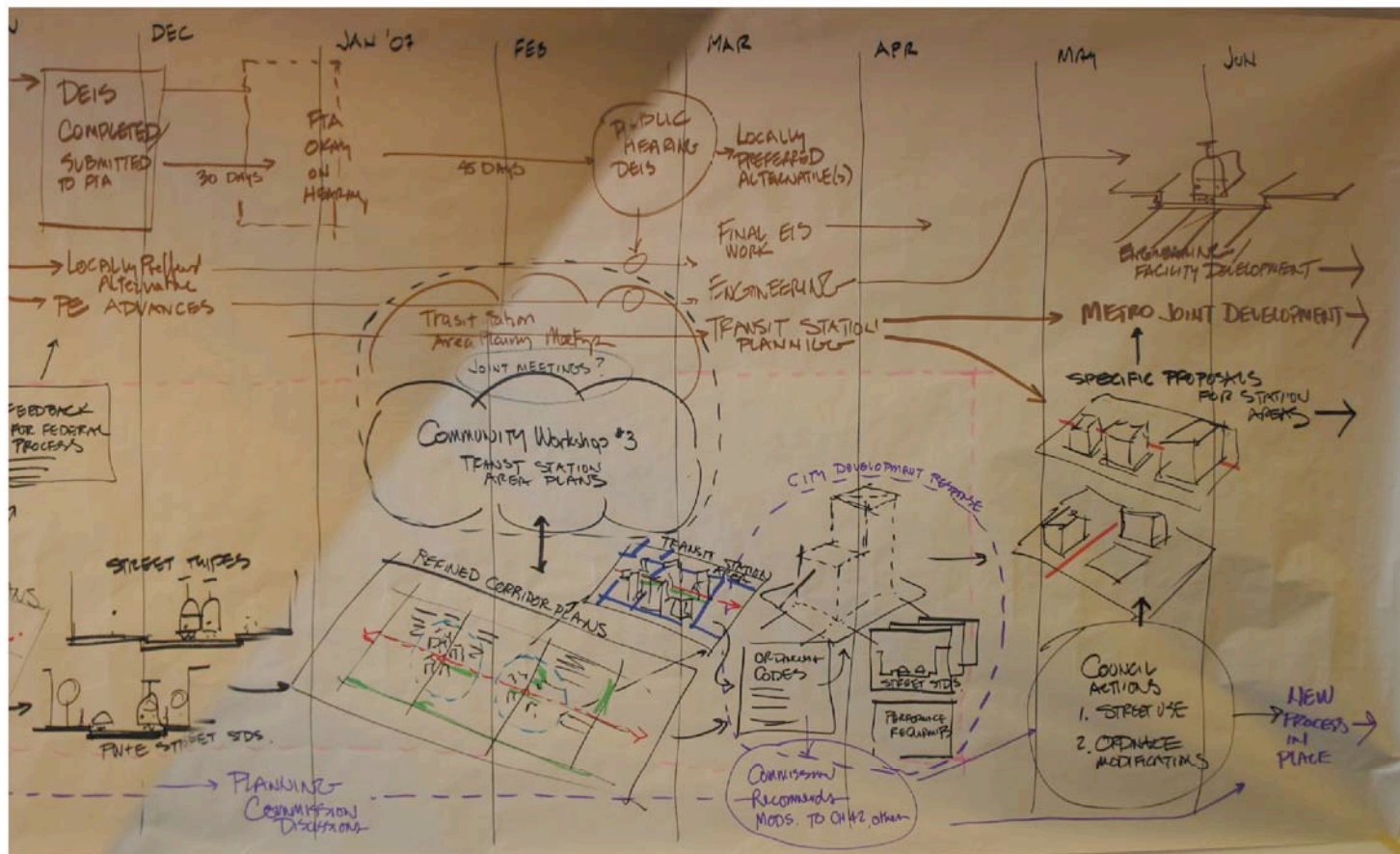
V. *a p p e n d i c e s*

1. Overall process flow chart
2. Citiventure powerpoint presentation August 26, 2006
3. Workshop instructions
4. 'Place types' handout
5. Photos of workshop maps by table
6. Typed copies of workshop flip charts by table
7. End-of-session Report Back notes
8. Steering Committee members list



I. Overall process flow chart





August 26, 2006 Community Workshop Presentation

Presented by: Citiventure

Building Successful Communities: Houston's Opportunity



Marilee Utter, CRE
Citiventure Associates

Tim Van Meter
Van Meter
Williams
Pollack
LLP
August 2006

It is difficult to design a space that will not attract people. What is remarkable is how often this has been achieved.

--William H. Whyte

Return to Community



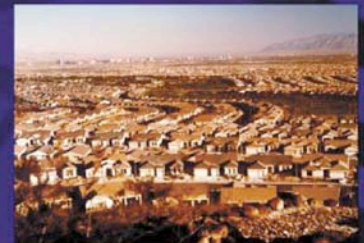
- Americans desperately want to belong to a community--a "village"
- Pre WWII: Ethnic villages and communities the norm

Loss of Village...

• Then



• Now



We shape our buildings, and afterwards, our buildings shape us.

--Winston Churchill

The Price of Village

- Today: people pay a premium to drive and park--ONCE
- Villages are among the world's highest priced real estate
- Problem: villages are too rare, too precious, and too expensive!



The Opportunity: Placemaking

- Pedestrian orientation
- Compact development
- Mix of uses
- Civic uses
- Transit
- Urban or suburban
- New or redevelopment
- Transformation



America is undergoing some profound changes...

Changing Demographics of Metro Areas

- Married couples with kids no longer dominant
- Empty nesters on the rise
- Single person households want "urbanity"
- The rise of the "Creative Class"



Married Couples with Children No Longer Dominant



27% of households in 1990, now only 22%

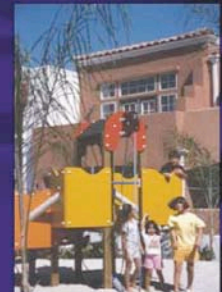
Empty Nesters: The Effect of Aging Baby Boomers on the U.S. Population



- By 2020, Americans over 55 will double from 35 to 70 million
- Older households without children strongly prefer more "urban" housing, with proximity to public transportation

The New Face of the American Family

- The average Hispanic household is 3.5 persons, average white household 2.5 persons
- Extended family living is desired. Age-in-place housing.
- Transit is a part of a way of life.



Everything is a drive away....

Suburban moms spend 17 full days a year behind the wheel—more than the average parent spends dressing, bathing and feeding a child.

--Surface Transportation Policy Project



Rising Transportation Costs—in Money and Time

Skyrocketing gasoline prices

Longer travel distances

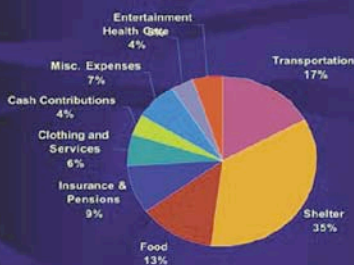
Greater commute time

Unpredictability of congestion

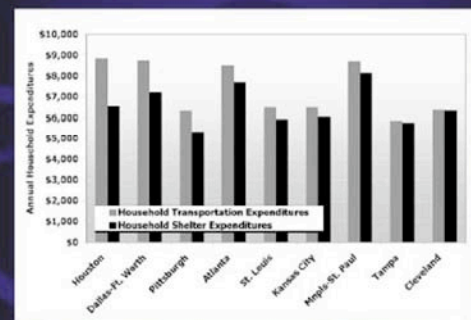


Transportation is the Highest Household Cost after Housing

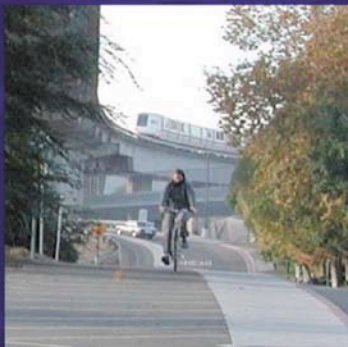
Typical American Household Budget



Cities Spending *More* on Transportation than Shelter



Only 60% of Americans drive cars...



Transit “Building Boom”

- Rail new “darling” of transit—changing perception and ridership
- Heavy demand for rail/trolley/streetcar/bus rapid transit in new regions
- Expansion of existing systems



Focus on Health/Prevention

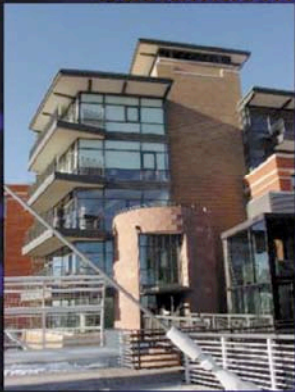


Profound Technology



- 24/7 connectedness
- "Speed of light" transactions
- Global marketplace
- Multi-tasking
- "Post-Geographic" employees with no permanent office
 - 15% now; 40% by 2012
- Generation Gap

Sustainability and Design



- Attention to global warming, reduction of greenhouse emissions
- Sensitivity to limited resources
- Value for green buildings
- Rise of the celebrity architect

Urban Reinvestment

- 75% of downtowns surveyed gained population in 1990's (Sohmer/ Lang 2002)
- New investment in housing, retail in downtowns and older suburbs



"Anything Anytime/ Have it my way"



Economic Polarization



Intense Competition Among Cities



Grand Central Station, NYC



The Embarcadero,
San Francisco

Intense Competition Among Cities



Suburbs
Market Commons
Arlington County, Virginia



Inner City
Pittsburgh, PA

Changing Real Estate Markets

Priority investments:

- 24 hour cities
- mixed-use
- access to transit

(Price Waterhouse
Coopers, *Emerging
Trends in Real
Estate 2003*)



Changing Markets



- 30+% of housing demand for denser, walkable, mixed-use communities
- <2% of new housing starts in this category

Investment Outlook 2005-2010

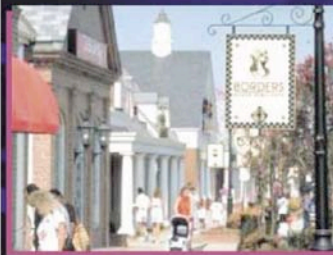
• OUT

- Greenfields
- Suburban office campuses
- Subdivisions without town centers
- “Drive ‘til you qualify”
- Big lot housing

• IN

- Brownfields
- Greyfields
- Grey Boxes
- Transit Oriented Districts (TOD)
- Mixed-income housing
- Suburban mixed-use
- Green development

Trends in Retail



- Free Standing/Big Box
- Enclosed/Regional Malls
- Grocery-anchored strips
- Lifestyle Centers
- Main Street/Town Square/“Places”

Trends in Office



- Prime locations
- Lively places
- Cool spaces
- Size flexibility
- Shorter lease terms
- Office condos

Trends in Residential



- Higher prices
- Smaller spaces
- High-amenity design
- Low maintenance living
- Central location
- "Flex" space
- Age in place

Important Other Uses



- Business incubators, office, research
- Medical centers
- Senior citizen complexes
- Governmental offices
- Civic facilities
- Colleges, multi-university centers, schools

The Case for Mixed Use



- Highest land values
- Most efficient use of land
- Long term economic sustainability for City
- Strengthens civic identity
- Opportunity for new housing types
- No-drive option

Transit Oriented Districts

- Walkable, compact, mixed-use districts around transit stations
- 1/4 mile, 360 degree ring
- Desirable destinations on the line
- Provide choices
- Economic recapture



What's in a Name?

- *Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)*
- *Transit-Oriented District*
- *Development Around Transit (DAT)*
- *Transit Village*
- *Transit-Ready Development*



TOD: An organizing principle to do what we should be doing anyway--creating great *people* places

TOD's work best where...

- Congestion is perceived as bad
- Transit system is extensive, affordable, convenient
- Housing prices are rising
- Driving costs are high
- TOD is part of a desirable "district"



TOD: What Works Today

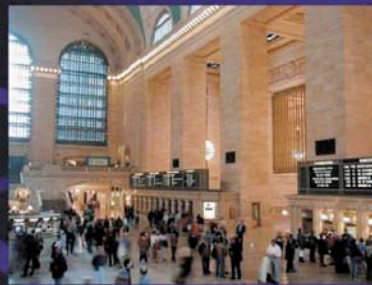
- Best TOD uses:
 - Townhouse/Multifamily Housing (rental or condo, affordable or premium, senior)
 - Offices (high employee count)
 - Civic Buildings (libraries, schools, postal)
 - Entertainment (cinemas, theaters, arenas)
 - Service Retail (cleaners, child care, banks)

TOD: What Works Today

- Minimum for a "TOD village": 5+ acres
- As many uses as possible in a 360 degree, 1/2 mile development ring
- Key elements of TOD zoning:
 - Mixed use horizontally and/or vertically
 - Reduced and shared parking
 - Increased densities
 - Strong ped and bike connections
 - Strict design guidelines

Every transit village is unique, and reflects its market...

Urban Downtown



Grand Central Station, NYC



The Embarcadero, San Francisco

Urban Neighborhood



Mockingbird Station, Dallas, TX

Suburban Town Center



Market Commons, Arlington, VA

Streetcar Suburb



The Crossings, Mountain View, CA

Neighborhood Transit Zone



Pittsburgh, PA

Commuter Town Center



Plano, TX

Neighborhood Type

Urban Downtown	>60 du/acre
Suburban Town Center	>50 du/acre
Urban Neighborhood	>20 du/acre
Suburban Neighborhood	>12 du/acre
Commuter Town Center	
Neighborhood Transit Zone	>7 du/acre

TOD: Here to stay because of the broad benefits...

TOD and Federal Transit Administration

- Inundated with transit requests--strategy to allocate and leverage scarce dollars
- Land use and TOD now a critical "New Starts" criteria



TOD and Regional Governance



- Provides a regional growth strategy
- Allocates and leverages scarce funding
- Ties land use to transportation
- Shapes urban form
- Addresses air quality, open space issues

TOD and Transit Agency



- Raises ridership
 - Residents 5X more likely
 - Workers 3X more likely
 - Off-peak demand
- Potential for profits/new funding source
- Popular, visible new product line

TOD and Local Community



- Identity/landmark "places"
- Community amenities (open space, plazas, public art, civic buildings, etc.)
- Reduces local infrastructure costs by 25%

TOD and Local Community

- Site for infill growth, additional housing
- Protects existing neighborhoods
- Powerful economic development generator



TOD and Economic Activity: Arlington County Before and After 30% revenue from 7% of the land



TOD and Economic Activity

- DALLAS:
LRT @\$800 M—
\$3.7B in economic
activity
(Source: Univ. of No. Texas)
 - PITTSBURGH
BUSWAY:
54 development projects
valued at \$302 million
(Source: Port Authority of
Allegheny County)
 - PORTLAND: MAX
\$2.4B in new development
value; Downtown
Streetcar @\$1.6 B
(Source: Tri-Met, Portland)
- OVERALL:
EXPECT 3-5X
"SPIN-OFF"
PRIVATE
INVESTMENT**

TOD and Property Values

- Washington DC:
+\$2-4/SF commercial rents
- Portland, OR:
– +10% rent premiums
- Dallas, TX:
– + 39% for residential, +53% for office
- Santa Clara, CA:
– +45% for residential, +23% for commercial

TOD and Property Values



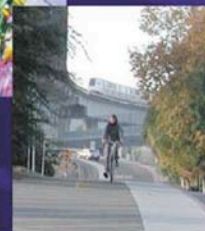
*Over time,
TOD's are the
most valuable
properties in the
metro area,
averaging a
premium of
15-20%.*

TOD and Workforce Housing

- Mixed-use offers local
services, amenities
without driving
- Transit extends access
to jobs
- Reduced dependence
on cars—cheaper!
- Onset of "Location
Efficient Mortgages"



TOD and Consumers



- Creates "hip" new
neighborhoods
- Offers alternative housing
types at suburban sites
- Makes transit more
convenient
- Reduces need for car
- Opportunity for more
affordable
housing/lifestyle

But getting the right development
isn't as easy as it looks....

TOD Implementation

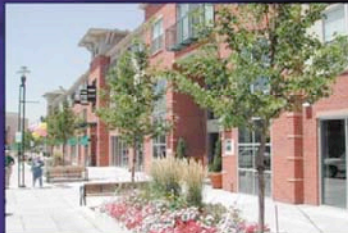


Short Analysis:

- Market
- Land
- Leadership

Common Public Sector Mistakes

- Not helping with land assembly
- Requiring retail on every street
- Requiring all vertical mixed-use
- Not understanding density
- Requiring too much parking



Common Public Sector Mistakes

- Investing in the wrong developer
- Expecting the developer to determine the use
- Not prioritizing the pedestrian FAR into the neighborhoods
- Not insisting on great design and materials



Development Champions

- Role of the Public Sector
 - Work with community to set long term vision
 - Identify priority development areas
 - Implement meaningful entitlements/incentives
 - Regulate design over use
- Role of the Private Sector
 - Bring capital and expertise to implement vision
 - Make reasonable profit in short term

Development Champions

- Role of the Not For Profit Sector
 - Call the question
 - Convene the players
 - Initiate thoughtful planning
 - Educate the community
 - Insist on good design
 - Advocate for good projects
 - Support elected officials

Words to Live By...

Doug Porter



- Choices
- Connections
- Collaborations

LET'S GO !!



Marilee Utter, CRE

Citiventurellc@msn.com

303-534-6620

Creating Great Neighborhoods



Great Diverse Residential Areas



Great Public Spaces



Great Streets



Great Street Transitions



Transect: Urban to Rural Transitions



Natural
Rural
Suburban
Urban
Urban Center
Urban Core



Street as Utility



- Auto Dominated
- Mono Culture of Land Uses
- Pedestrian Intolerant
- Anywhere USA

Street Transformation



- Street Front Buildings
- Mix of Uses
- Pedestrians

Street Design



- Pedestrian Sidewalks
- Street Landscaping
- Street Furniture

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop Presentation

Street as Place



- Activity
- Bicycling
- People Place

Street as Utility



- Auto Dominated
- Monoculture of Land Uses
- Pedestrian Intolerant
- Anywhere USA

Street Transformation



- Pedestrian Sidewalks
- Street Landscaping
- Street Furniture
- Street Medium

Street Design



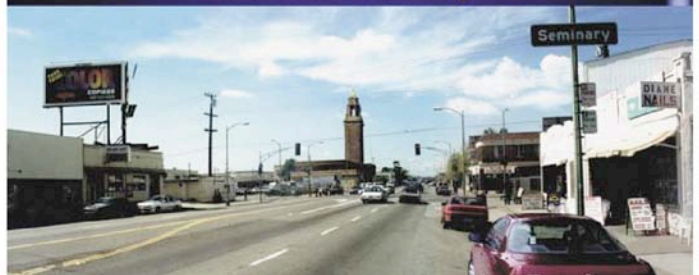
- Street Front Buildings
- Mix of Uses

Street as Place



- Pedestrians
- Activity
- People Place
- Convenient Parking

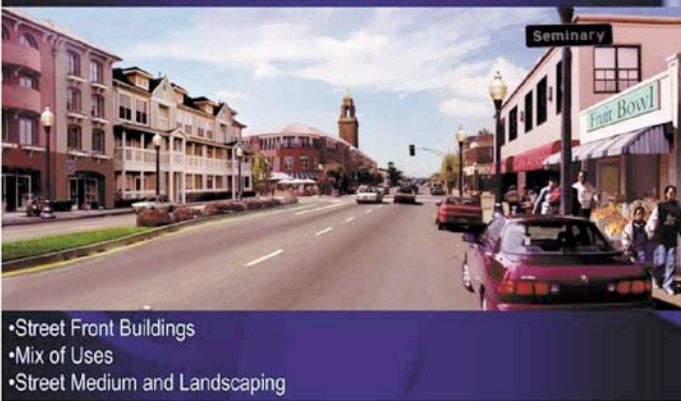
Street as Utility



- Auto Dominated
- Monoculture of Land Uses
- Anywhere USA

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop Presentation

Street Transformation



Street as Place



August 26, 2006 Community Workshop

Volunteer Instructions











- 8:00** **Arrive, Sign-in, and get familiar with map and materials**
- 9:00** **Presentation Program**
- 10:25– 10:30** **Task 1: Getting Started**
(Participants place dots on map)
- Where do you live?
 - Where do you work? Where do you go to school?
- 10:30- 11:00** **Task 2: Existing Conditions (Discuss and Map)**
- Treasures
 - Problems
 - Places/ Activity Centers
 - Landmarks
 - Connections:
 - Pedestrian Where do you walk? Where is walkable?
 - Bicycle Where do you bike?
 - Transit Where do you use transit?
 - Car
- 11:00- 11:30** **Task 3: Growth** *Reminding that growth is likely to come to all areas of the city.
- Areas of Change: where would you like to see growth occur?
 - Areas of Stability: what would you like to see remain as is?
- 11:30- 11:50** **Task 4: Place Types**
In the areas defined as “Areas of Change” indicate the Place Type you would like to see in the given area, including but not limited to:
- Major Urban Center
 - Urban Center
 - Neighborhood
 - Retail Street
 - Campus/ Special Events Center
- 11:50- 12:00** **Task 5: Last Thoughts**
- Facilitator requests a volunteer to report
- 12:00- 12:15** **Break/ Grab Lunches**
- 12:15- 1:15** **Report Back** (2 Minutes per Group)
- Highlights/ Growth and Stability Areas

Logistics

1. Friday Afternoon Setup & Orientation
2. Volunteer Packet pick up and map/ materials orientation
3. Corridor assignments in packet
4. Comment Cards made available at tables
5. Recorders: Put Map# and Group# on every sheet
6. Recorders: Assemble all materials and map at end of workshop & turn in to Volunteer sign in table
7. Designers: write clearly and use Notation system & color codes.

Place Types

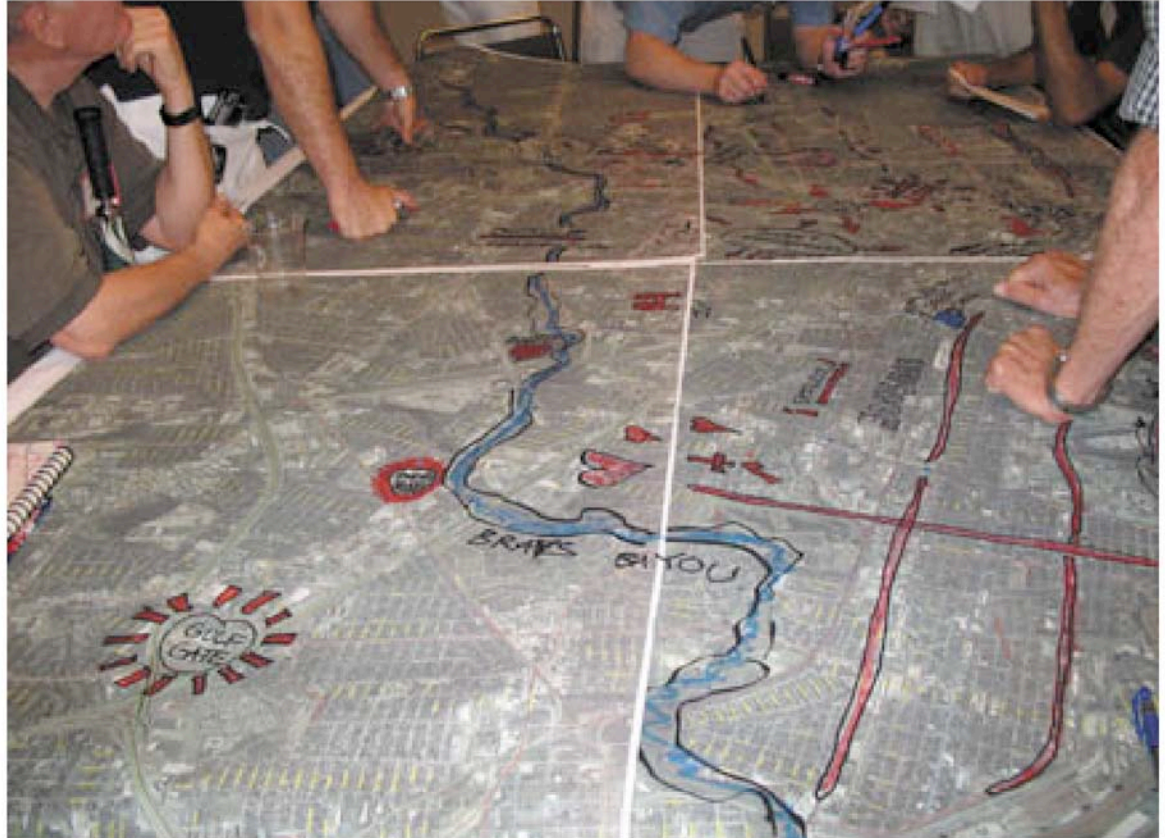
Places	Activity Mix	Housing Types	Commercial Employment Types
Major Urban Center	Office Residential Retail Entertainment Civic Uses	Multi-Family/Loft	Employment Emphasis, with more than 250,000 sf office and 50,000 sf retail
Urban Center	Residential Retail Office	Multi-Family/ Townhome	Limited Office. Less than 250,000 sf office. More than 50,000 sf retail
Neighborhood	Residential/ Neighborhood Retail	Multi-Family/ Townhome/ Small Lot Single Family	Local-Serving Retail. No more than 50,000 sf
Retail Street	Residential/ Neighborhood Retail	Small Lot Single Family	Main Street Retail Infill
Campus/ Special Events Center	University/ Campus Sports Facilities	Limited Multi-Family	Limited Office/Retail

Proposed Scale	Connectivity	Local Examples	Color Code	Examples
5 Stories and above	Intermodal Facility/ Transit Hub. Major Regional Destination with quality feeder and circulator connections	Downtown Galleria District Medical Center		
3 Stories and above	Sub-Regional Destination. Some Park n Ride. Linked district circulator and feeder transit service	Areas of Montrose/ Museum District Allen Parkway		
1-5 Stories	Walk up station. Very Small Park and Ride, if any. Local and express bus service.	Mid-Town West University Magnolia Park Montrose		
1-4 Stories	Bus or streetcar corridors. Feeder transit service. Walk up stops. No parking.	Rice Village 19th Street (Heights) Highland Village		
Varies	Large Commuter Destination	Rice University U of H TSU Reliant Park		

Sample August 26, 2006 Workshop maps



Sample August 26, 2006 Workshop maps



Sample August 26, 2006 Workshop maps



Sample August 26, 2006 Workshop maps



Sample August 26, 2006 Workshop maps



Sample August 26, 2006 Workshop maps



August 26, 2006 Community Workshop
Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Table: A1

- Galleria – “I can walk there”

Areas of Change

- Hempstead Highway needs TONS of landscaping and some light industrial and commercial development.
- Long Point needs widening, curb, appeal, retail, and landscaping
- Connection needed: Long Point to Beltway 8
- Connection needed: extend Hollister north from Clay to Old Hempstead
- Local connectivity needed for midrise redevelopment/improvements taking place Westbury Square (off map) needs redevelopment
- Green space: use demolished Hilton Apartments near Landrun Middle School for parks.
- Single Family Residential should not be developed for other uses

Task 5: Last thoughts

- No widening of residential streets in neighborhoods
- Need to build local community through communication!

Report Back: 3 Points

- No widening of streets in single-family neighborhoods

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop
Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Table No: A2

- Old existing trees
- Park potential
- Trees in median at Richmond
- High crime?
- Parking Problems
- Poor Lighting
- Nuisance Establishments
- Richmond Entertainment Strip (Traffic Crime Problems)
- Westheimer/Mens club facilities/these operated OK/others questionable
- ZONE D'EROTICA near Galleria/Big Issue
- Parking in redevelopment/not enough and probably not well located/not enough for village/retail (concepts)
- Commercial/Infill to neighborhoods/near Timbergrove
- Overly congested parking in redevelopment residential areas inner loop
- Heights/supertight street grid COULD support residential (re) growth
- Maintain "utility functionality" (services) in infill in redevelopment
- Residential redevelopment is VERY underserved with retail, etc.
- need more (groceries)
- Still need "Best Buy" type facilities
- Need INDUSTRY in City to support; not just residential (as current trend)
- LONGPOINT/now commercial/but would support transitional growth ie mixed use redevelopment/out to Gessner
- Where we get redevelopment, get mixed use!
- Huge redevelopment Issue: DETENTION
- HARWIN high crime perception but shopping opportunities/unique retail
- High density but no supporting consumer/retail facilities
- Too much the same now; move to more of a town center concept but
- Property ownership is diverse (different goals)
- So hard to redevelop (short term)
- Needs (major) shopping (lost K-Mart)
- Don't redevelop to point of removing/eliminating (affordable) Housing
- This area has lots of Industrial; not offered as (place type) choice but needed
- More campuses or special event places?
- New neighborhood centers desirable at every block; but hard to do
- needs to include more employment/industrial
- Maybe retail street
- Goal: get greater employment out of 290 corridor
- Mixed use at end of Post Oak?
- Need concentration
- Characteristics are distinct
- Not enough ownership
- Large multi-family areas
- Broken up to more neighborhoods/ownership mixed in
- City within city
- If we had another 2 _ million people...

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop
Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

- Affordable housing! Keep component
- Way too big to make it one neighborhood
- Moore Street: people are there (opportunity for infill street concentration)
- Versus (opposite) heights; can increase density there
- St. Arnold Brewery: "new" treasure (not old)

- International cities have statues; gathering places; **make it a "Destination"**
 - 1) Keep treasures
 - 2) (Have) weekend (destination) sites, structural changes
 - 3) Galleria: symbol of Houston; why visit/make it better/
better sidewalks, drinking (fountains)
- MARTHA: Concern for **(my) neighborhood**
 - 1) expenses for paying for periphery development in Houston – issue
 - 2) Like to see change/vision
(poor air quality is an expense; like to see good mass transit system)
- JOE: Focus on built urban corridors and make more **pedestrian friendly**
 - 1) Mode shift to make pedestrian friendly
 - 2) Necessary to transition
- SALLY: Pedestrian
 - 1) Create **more neighborhood centers**
 - 2) (Have) shopping, educational (options) and amenities
- KENT: Don't lose ground
 - 1) **Be proactive; ID change up front**
 - 2) Stop reacting/fixing
 - 3) Diversity/encourage community groups, management districts, etc.
 - 4) Area this size/hard to prioritize and ID/
Adds fuel for more comprehensive planning
 - 5) We are not ready for 2 _ more million people!
Areas deteriorating; losing value
- **FLOODING**, Trees
 - 1) Detention/Retention upstream
 - 2) But within city/small facilities/especially (need) with redevelopment
 - 3) Can we buy detention? (only within _ mile; in watershed)
 - 4) Mitigating out (in) northwest (areas) does not resolve
 - 5) TREES: In parking etc is good but can pay City \$125 and not (have to) plant
- BILL: **Air Quality/Non Attainment** (Be cognizant of impacts.)
- reiterate Air Quality/Traffic
 - 1) Lucky to have enormous rains; **drinking water**
 - 2) Other cities will suffer (from lack of drinking water)
 - 3) We'll grow
 - 5) Addresses air quality issues

Votes per category:

- Concern for my neighborhood (3 votes)
- Pedestrian friendly (5 votes)
- More neighborhood centers (6 votes)

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop
Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Report Back: 3 Points (Joe asked to present)

- More neighborhood centers
- Bike/pedestrian friendly corridors
- Mitigate environmental impacts of growth (quality environmental; bikes, pedestrian friendly)

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop
Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Table No: A3

- Streetscape (ex. Post Oak, Richmond, Tanglewood), trees, esplanades, landscape
- Bayous (Buffalo, White Oak, Brays) - hike/bike trails and open space along them
- Any city park in the corridor
- Diverse population – multi-cultural corridors
- Retail along Harwin.
- Open space along utility corridor between Brays Bayou and Holcombe
 - Unsightly – lack of trees
 - Shortage of Parks
 - Need a community center
- Suggestion for sidewalk* – Border/barrier along sidewalk to define walkway
- Noise from freeways – spills over into residential neighborhoods, can be heard from far away
- Traffic Congestion – 610 especially

Changes

- ripe for mixed use redevelopment, although Delmar Stadium is much used and should be preserved
- mixed use area, could handle more growth
- – want to see more development and growth directed to these areas instead of residential areas
- more retail development would be good
- Massive re-landscaping and more landscaping
- COH give more support to neighborhood deed restrictions (protect)
- improve, needs more amenities for residents, such as community center
- Voice for apartment dwellers
- Connect Buffalo Bayou bike trails on east and west
- improvements/enhancements
- lots of change/growth already taking place.
- Braes Bayou Hike and Bike Trail

Note: Preserve multi-cultural flavor of the corridor/area

- Preserving neighborhoods
 - Enforced deed restrictions
- Parking in front of business
 - Discourage
- Protect neighborhoods in area as development occurs

Report Back Easel Notes:

- Connect smaller outlying centers

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop
Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Table No: A4

- Problems
 - need to have more rail to trail conversions and improve/modify existing trails
 - greener
 - population growth
 - city wants Houston to be like NY, particularly in terms of having ordinances in place that encourage density
 - brownfield remediation
 - development without reforestation
 - lost lakes to development
 - a need exists for traffic studies to be completed before a school is built
 - air quality, especially pollution along I-10 resulting from traffic congestion
 - parking ordinances undermine the lack of parking for businesses
 - hanging power lines all over city
 - above ground utilities
 - billboards and commercial signage, especially those advertising alcoholic beverages)
 - externalities, such as noise pollution
 - we don't have a commuter rail to connect urban and suburban activity centers
 - legible addresses for properties and businesses
 - need to preserve village character
 - city ordinances do not address sidewalk requirements, especially for new development
 - ordinance enforcement
 - add trees to streets to make them more pedestrian-friendly
 - walk to city institutions, such as libraries (e.g., Heights Library)
 - don't just streetscape, but also implement a follow-up program for streetscape improvements
 - bring bayous back
 - too many impervious surfaces or areas with concrete
- Areas of Stability
 - Neighborhoods as town centers
 - Multiple business centers
- Areas of Change
 - Better service-oriented neighborhoods with mixed-uses
 - More parks, less high-rises
 - Less teardowns
 - Better scale (do not allow too many high-rises)
 - Quality, sustainable high-density development
 - Less apt. complexes
 - Balance in density along transit corridors
 - Abandoned businesses replaced with new ones
 - Increase home ownership in Sharpstown, thereby reducing apartment rentership (i.e., apartment renters become townhome owners)

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop
Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

- Create affordable mid-rises along 290 (Northwest Area) to increase homeownership
- Create access to health care facilities in newly developed areas and/or subdivisions
- Opportunity exists to create affordable housing in Sharpstown
- Do not increase density because it damages “village” character of Houston villages
- preserve as Neighborhood
- Vacant Parking lots/big boxes should be redeveloped
- More parks
- Turn blighted, decaying commercial areas
- Flooding is a key element that should be considered in all types of planning efforts
- it is very important to consider the traffic impact of new development
- parking should be expensive
- less strip centers, more mixed-use developments
- realistic transit analysis of what works versus what doesn't
- there should be no public-funded corporate incentives to build along transit corridors
- Signage on Budweiser building at I-10/Washington is offensive and sends a negative message about Houston
- Billboards are not an overriding problem. Noise and air pollution cannot be avoided if roads are expanded;
- Many ROW green spaces have the potential to be developed into urban gardens and orchards (i.e., I-10)

Report Back: 3 Points

- Create more parks and green spaces to reduce the impact of impervious surfaces, through incentives and regulations
- Promote the village concept w/ “Main Streets” and Neighborhood/Retail Place Types

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop

Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Table No: B-1

- Treasured Buildings (purple heart) – unique architecture
- Old Trees (drawn as green bubbles/tree tops)
- Flooding (blue X)
- Crime (yellow X)

- Campus/Special events center (blue stripes)
 1. Theater District
 2. George R. Brown Convention Center / Minute Maid Park / Toyota Center
 3. Houston Community College – central campus
 4. Texas Southern University
 5. University of Houston
 6. Memorial Park
 7. Reliant Center
 8. Rice University
 9. University of St. Thomas
 10. Texas Medical Center
 11. Hermann Park
 12. Hermann Zoo
 13. Museum District
 14. West University ballfield / City Hall

- Bike and Pedestrian (yellow stripes)
 1. Memorial Park
 2. Buffalo Bayou
 3. Allen Parkway
 4. Braes Bayou
 5. Heights Blvd.
 6. White Oak / Houston Ave.

Task 5: Last thoughts

Report Back: 3 Points

- Embrace infill and change
- Maintain unique character
- Places that want to stay the same face challenges and conflict
- BIKES

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop
Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Table No: B2

Number of Participants: 8

neighborhood (needs revitalization).

lack of amenities/infrastructure)

Access to Bayous, (Dying Mall), Parks (not enough green space, too small, wrong amenities, poorly managed in design)

Flooding along sections of I 45 North and South

- Parks, Trees, Railroads and Streets (utilize these amenities to assist in preservation and creation of neighborhood character).
- neighborhood character and revitalization.
- All parks and bayous are an attraction and should be preserved. Neighborhoods should be built up and improved around these amenities.
- Neighborhoods and community should do more to increase mixed use in primarily residential neighborhoods. Encourage mixed use development.
- all stable areas experiencing growth.
- Do more to increase and improve development in all Wards. has pretty much been gentrified, so save the other Wards.
- Use rail as a catalyst, do not destroy neighborhood character.

Task 5: Last thoughts

- Preserve Landmarks, Historic neighborhoods and character
- Great neighborhoods, no gentrification wanted
- Concentrate on Flooding Issues
- Environment & landscaping maximizing native plants.
- Economic Diversity (mixed use development)
- More green spaces with native plants

Report Back: 3 Points

- Preserve history, landmarks
- Don't concrete over us (Note to TXDOT)
- Control gentrification
- How we develop infrastructure
- Use native plants and green space, usable spaces

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop
Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Table No: B3

- (historical homes)
- Super Neighborhoods
- Project Row Houses (3rd Ward)
- Vietnamese Community
- Old Chinatown
- Museum District
- Parks
 - Bayou Park
 - Woodland Heights
- Utility lines in neighborhoods and pole location
- Policy that coherently guides development within the public realm that provides tools to focus development along the major corridors, and that through transit supports and connects on urban centers
- Support the neighborhoods through focusing the change on the corridors by emphasizing mixed uses and the pedestrian.
- Create urban centers in targeted areas with proper transportation linkages throughout the city.

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop
Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Table No: B4

- Driving through Museum District (trees, distinctive architecture, Hermann Park)
- Heights Boulevard
- Preservation of Heights = "Hometown near Downtown"
- Sense of "being forgotten"
- Police not enforcing law and drug deals going down again
- Illegal dumping
- Diversity of experience
- Scott Street = mariachi bands, b-b-q, hawks, seafood + fish from warehouses
- Lunchtime Concerts @ Jones Hall
- North Main = keep affordable housing
- Add community center
- I 45 could be tunnel / parkway = bring communities back together that were split
- Street was patched properly
- Bayou Trail = hiking, dog walking
- Gang graffiti not being cleaned up
- more trees / wider sidewalks
- Freeway noise
- Bayous flood due to debris
- Drugs in Woodland Park
- More investment in basic services to existing neighborhoods instead of so much focus on new development
- Much needed trolleys were got rid off.
- Divergent viewpoints on rail vs. buses
- Connect places that have most people (connect major hubs)
- Stay in existing ROW
- In areas that are changing, encourage retail to stay on major arteries

Report Back: 3 Points

- Place types do not allow for light manufacturing – provide jobs, need to be located close to transit
- Focus new development on existing arteries to preserve surrounding neighborhoods
- Improve standards (signage regulations)
- "Let the market lead"/ respect individual property owners
- Stay within existing ROW

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop
Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Table No: B5

- Problems
 - Homelessness & Prostitution (San Jacinto & Holman)
 - Flooding (Wheeler between 59 & 288)
 - Sidewalks needed on Leeland East of Dowling
 - Trash
 - Poorly planned development (castel court)
 - Inconsistent maintenance
 - Lack of pedestrian connectivity to downtown from surrounding housing
- Desired Changes
 - New Park
 - Walkable community & preserve history
 - Walkable commercial & residential SE corner of downtown SN 61?
 - Air quality (more consideration and improvement)
 - More retail and grocery stores in downtown and midtown
 - Barrier free design (handicap accessibility)
 - Connect skywalks, bikepaths, tunnels to new downtown park and existing ... pathways
- New mixed use and urban centers are emphasized in yellow hatch marks
 - Preservation of historical structures and wildlife
- Important issues to keep in mind as we grow
 - Connecting parks
 - Good design
 - Preservation of historic places (neighborhoods and green areas)
 - Abandoned railways into bike paths
 - Flooding regulations & drainage (permeable ratios and materials)
 - Landscaping, more trees
 - Art areas-gateways, statues, galleries...
 - Pedestrian friendly areas

Report Back: 3 Points

- Mobility: preservation of assets (neighborhoods, landmarks, wildlife, green space)
- Sustainability needs to be considered in all new projects, infrastructure life cycle (pedestrian friendly design, landscaping, flooding, housing durability, drainage-permeable surfaces)

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop
Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Table No: B6

- **Problems:**
 - Under development inside the Loop vs. Outside the Loop,
 - High density and Drainage detention areas require developers to build inside loop.
 - Better sewers option (ordinance requirements) instead of large detention ponds, were suggested for building outside the loop. To attract developers.
 - Also Creative Viaducts, Lake areas and *stronger development design standards (PW-).
 - *Flood Plain Mitigation need strengthened.
 - *Preserve neighborhood character (stop tear-downs).

Corridor Suggestions:

- Identify areas to remain “un touched” treasures, and indicate areas to develop ...Example: locate Brownfield area to re-develop for corridors.

Task 5: Last thoughts

- Various perspectives ...suggesting balance needed, opinions to give to Developers and Planners.
- Alternative rail routes in reference to neighborhoods because of land-use options: vacant properties (East-side along Hwy 59).
- Potential of using existing Downtown area and access to neighborhoods, community schools (Leading to improvements) with proper funds, and consideration of “development” character issues.

Report Back: 3 Points

- Planning ordinance flexible requirements, needed to facilitate changes to governances on developing in retail areas along corridors.
- Allowing developers the ability to build in areas outside of the loop, (leas land use for detention and better sewer system drainage-PW-issues)..while using bayou basin as park areas, for example Whaite Oak Bayou!
- Alternatives to the way the city is viewed, ...areas to connect (with the corridors, retrail, communities and schools), with less emphasis on vehiclular traffic, leading to pedestrian, bike-routes etc.).

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Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Table No: B7

Need a Multi-service center in Northside Village.
27' of ROW will be taken for proposed Rail. This will destroy his business.
Business has been in place 35 years; the business has been there since 1957.
+ Love the trees
+ Deed Restricted
-* Unattractive strips
- Density mix is not working in some areas
- No sidewalks
- Buses
+ Good neighborhood
+ Lots of Condos
- High Crime rate
+ Attractive Area
- Explosive development
- Uncontrolled development
- Matchbox condo
- Lack of planning/driven by \$
Love neighborhood
- Student housing
- Lack of service + transportation.
- Multi-generation
- Lack of zoning
- Lack of respect for historic preservation & character.
- University housing is a real issue due to high gas price.
Development on freeway is affecting neighborhood.
* Aging community, change is inevitable.
* 1 mile is a comfortable distance
* Needs mixed-use +more trees.
* * Easy access to amenities.
Long term residence
- Lack of mixed income.
- Historical sense of permanence +community.
- Influx of high end condo development.
Losing eco mix/green space
Creating a crisis for culture of neighborhood's character.
Centrally located; access to work centers +universities.
Residents are being taxed out of their neighborhood
The best thing is that it is centrally located.
There was an opportunity to move back in the community in the past.
There were homes, yards, kids playing and a sense of neighborhood.
More density will create a concrete sense & a different type community.
We discuss what we want, but what about the developers & their agenda? They are the driving force of what takes place in our communities.
Centrally located
Church & friends in area

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Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Concerned about plans +amenities will be there.
Walkability, sense of neighborhood.
Different ages, community service
Interested in Historical Preservation
Speed limit –safer for walking/biking
Development needs to be done sensitively
Good example of mixed use +density
Great trees
Wish all neighborhoods can be beautiful + more accessible.
*Speeds are slower + the area is more pedestrian friendly.
Wants development to maintain quality of life.
Infrastructure and redevelopment happening.
More restaurant & grocery
stabilized in terms maintaining economic mix + residential nature.
business/economic development corridors + more density.
Elgin OST to become a retail street.
Sees Midtown as an Urban Center not a neighborhood.
A mile is a walkable distance!
Growth + Stability – Growth/change is inevitable.
We need to outline how change happens.
needs the amenities to be more walkable +livable; while maintaining needs of
university students & faculty.
Along Scott Street make it a mixed use & mixed income development.
Neighborhood to be preserved as it relates to UH/TSU with easy access to
amenities using “Rice Village” model.
Need Multi-service Center in Northside Village for service & youth programs.
Use rail development to manage growth while maintaining neighborhood character
More community college.
Access in urban corridors.

(Sunnyside resident)
Goes to Pearland for all community services/social services.
No community services.
Mostly single family homes.

General Wants

- Access to more to parks.
- Trees/Trees/ Trees
- Walkable neighborhoods
- Economic Mix.
- Intergenerational communities
- Good dependable accessible public transportation.
- Pocket parks in high density areas.
- Anti blight & graffiti programs.
- Smaller apt dwellings in “3rd Ward”
- More Urban retail/restaurants and amenities.
- Incentive for property tax programs that will support mixed income.

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Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

- More Urban retail/restaurants and amenities.
- Incentive for property tax programs that will support mixed income.
- Need wide & more sidewalks via better development guidelines.
- Growth & Stabilization between OST & Elgin 288 & University.
- Wants to see the areas to be primarily residential
- Improve signage.
- Keep Major Urban Centers same.
- Increase density in current major urban centers.
- Scenic woods

Report Back: 3 Points

- Intergenerational + economically diverse neighborhoods.
- More “Green” city-open space, alternative transportation, pedestrian, environmental, healthy people.
- Preserve historic residential identity of neighborhoods/while providing amenities/enhancement near educational/cultural centers (universities, medical center etc).

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Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Table No: C1

- All pocket parks
- Brays Bayou – Project Brays – Link to Medical Center
- All Parks: McGregor, Mason, Hermann, Memorial
- Historic Downtown Houston

What do you treasure about your community?

- Flowers
- Trees
- Neighborhoods
- Allen Parkway (beautiful drives)
- Ability to ride bikes
- Linkages with linear parks
- Buffalo Bayou – hike bike

Less than Desirable Issues:

- Homeless problem – find solution
- Erotica – XXX advertisement – strict enforcement
- Heat – need tools to mitigate/minimize
- More jobs within neighborhoods
- Eliminate substandard buildings
- Streets need improvements (sidewalks, curves (curbs?), trees, etc.)
- Limited setback requirements
- Citizen voice needed in city development

Areas Want Growth

- Areas with vacant property
- Around transit area nodes
- mixed use
- Density opportunities (upper Neartown Montrose)
- affordable housing!!!

Areas Don't Want Growth

- Survey each neighborhood to find out desires of growth!
- No growth in green areas (parks)
- Deed restricted areas
- Neighborhood Preservation – Eastwood, Wheeler/north of Brays Bayou

Other Issues:

- COH vacant property
- Development of affordable housing (mainly in east/SE BU, UH area)
- What's affordable today may not be affordable tomorrow!
- Commercial property no longer available
- Transect approach – dense on boulevard, less dense behind.
- How to address non-deed restricted neighborhoods → neighborhood preservation
- Benefit to government to have more density vs. lower density.

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Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Task 5: Last thoughts

- Creating nodes (nodular development)
- Build complete/multi-user streets (pedestrian, transit, bikers, landscaping, etc.)
- Increase residential density only near employment centers
- Preserve neighborhoods
- Deal with social issues
- Maintain, restore, create affordable housing
- Increase green space/save trees
- Work/mitigate our climate (it's HOT!)

Report Back: 3 Points

- Increase green space; save trees

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Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Table No: C2

- Areas of Growth:
Industrial areas along bayou
Downtown surface lots

Task 5: Last thoughts

- Reduce or eliminate setback requirements along transit corridors
- Preserving neighborhoods
- Create Places along transit – not just thoroughfares by making sidewalks accessible and pedestrian friendly and requiring street level retail in urban centers
- Develop guidelines for visual content of City – signage, overhead power lines, etc.
- Require street level retail in identified urban centers

Report Back: 3 Points

1. Create place along transit – not just throughways – by making sidewalks accessible and pedestrian friendly and requiring street level retail in urban centers.
2. Preserve existing neighborhoods and strengthen guidelines for visual content of city such as signage and overhead power lines.

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop
Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Table No: C3

- Problems:
 - Development slow to correspond with Transit (Midtown)
 - New development is of a suburban nature (Midtown)
 - Lack of connectivity and landscaping – shade not developed as a park – needs park amenities
 - METRO not consider approached that DO NOT destroy existing businesses and plantings (Midtown)
 - Flooding of underpass at Holcombe and Fanning
 - METRO not user/neighborhood friendly
 - No/few land use regulations
 - No sidewalk requirements
 - METRO not plan for rapid transit, flooding or civil emergencies (e.g. evacuations)
 - No tree preservation
 - Flooding

Task 3: Growth (Mapping areas of change and stability)

- Stability:
 - Preserve quality of life
 - Preserve neighborhoods
 - pedestrian campus
 - Existing Neighborhoods
- Change:
 - Preserve Quality of Life
 - *Problems of flood prevention*
 - *Porous concrete*
 - *Tree cover*
 - *Water collection*
 - *Pier & beam construction*
 - *Problems of Gentrification*
 - *Ethnic/economics cleansing*

Task 5: Last thoughts

- Growth-take into account historical value/ preservation cultural
- Regulation & Policy – shaping types of development – rules for preservation – opportunity for deed restrictions
- Residential/Town homes – proportional parking and green space guidelines and infrastructure
- Representative cross section of neighborhood be consulted before change takes place
- Development must have all elements: parking, green space, sidewalks, access & egress
- Higher development standards through city policy/regulations

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop
Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Table No: C4

- Existing streets in areas experiencing redevelopment
 - Making the above streets major thoroughfares kills the treasure
 - Narrow neighborhood streets are a treasure
- Problems:
 - Curb cuts without authorization
 - Driveway sizes
 - Sidewalk widths, too narrow – lack of “pedestrianism”
 - Lack of affordable housing
 - Grandfather clauses for street parking
 - Loss of green canopy
 - Loss of permeable land
 - Suburban-style development
 - Billboards
 - No requirement to build commercial buildings to street front – i.e. CVS in Midtown etc.
 - Parks – maintain what we have as a minimum and there is room for expansion of parks
 - Historic Neighborhoods with architectural standards
 - Trees part of Main Street
 - Beautiful, tree-lined streets through out
 - Boulevards
- What Should Change
 - 20 acres owned by Metro/Rice & Wheeler Blodgett – a civic opportunity to create public spaces (library, park, etc.)
 - Add workforce housing/blue collar housing in urban center
 - Get rid of billboards
 - Increase residential development in Downtown
 - Improve utilities/ bury power lines
 - Maximize value of ROW –improve sidewalks
 - Modular street paving
 - Stronger Historic Preservation Ordinance
 - Build closer to street – reconsider set-back ordinance i.e. major thoroughfare designation and 25 feet set-back
 - Better protection of old growth trees
 - Freeway expansion below grade
 - Control valet parking in residential areas
 - Transit-oriented districts that include parking facilities
 - Parking garages in transit corridors – near stations (point of origin)
 - Manage street parking (if parking on street is free, no one will use garages). On and off street parking and shared parking alternatives.
 - Limit curb cuts on new development
 - Take advantage of ROW on rail lines and of rail yards for redevelopment
 - Traffic mitigation during redevelopment to keep traffic moving

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Table Workgroup - Typed Notes from flip charts

Transit Oriented District (Purple Bubble)

Opportunities (Orange O)

- Downtown – opportunities for residential development
- Montrose and Richmond
- Astrodome Area (remove parking lots and develop housing/commercial)

Affordable Housing

Task 5: Last thoughts

-
- Historic Preservation
- Do not be hostile to the car – integrate parking into new development and transit
- Preserve and enhance inner city neighborhoods in an affordable manner
- Affordable Housing
- Avoid gentrification
- Consider air quality and public health
- Change ordinance to accommodate urban development
- Enforcement and accountability of ordinances
- Consult engineers in planning and development process
- Consider freeway expansion on air quality and quality of life
- Transit-oriented development doesn't need to depend on rail
- Pedestrian-oriented development
- Bury utilities for safety and aesthetics
- Analysis of tax codes – offer incentives for urban redevelopment
- Need comprehensive plan
- Preserve neighborhood by accommodating new urban development
- Strategic Planning

Summary of top priorities by commonalities

- Historic Preservation
- Infrastructure Improvement
- Affordable Housing
- Change and enforce ordinances
- Comprehensive Plan

Report Back: 3 Points

- Design & Engineering infrastructure – pedestrian, vehicular, transit, parking, freeways, setbacks, aesthetics, air quality, shade and other cover to make streets walkable and safe.
- Preservation of Neighborhoods including affordable housing, historic structures and neighborhoods. Accommodate urban development.
- Comprehensive Planning - Sector planning (with reasonable evaluation intervals) with guidance/regulations on:
 - parking/building ordinance, tax incentives, design standards, major thoroughfares and transportation/transit planning, setbacks and let market respond

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop
End-of-session top three concerns by table workgroup

Total Attendees: 240

Each table accommodated approximately 12 to 15 participants

Summary of key items of importance from each table

Table A1

No widening of streets in single-family neighborhoods
Commuter rail on freeways (like Hwy 290, I-10, I-45)
Fort Bend parkway; don't extend from South Main and Chimney Rock to 610 (final phase)

Table A2

More neighborhood centers
Bike/pedestrian friendly corridors
Mitigate environmental impacts of growth

Table A3

Increase connectivity to Uptown and Memorial Park, include walking and biking
Protect neighborhoods in area as development occurs
Connect smaller outlying centers

Table A4

Create more parks and green spaces to reduce the impact of impervious surfaces, through incentives and regulations
Promote the village concept w/ "Main Streets" and Neighborhood/Retail Place Types
More transit options

Table A5

Community input in decision process then you will spend your time more wisely
Pedestrian amenities; tunnel system as example
Ch 42; community input in amendment process

Table B1

Embrace infill and change
Maintain unique character
Places that want to stay the same face challenges and conflict
Bikes

Table B2

Preserve history, landmarks
Don't concrete over us
Control gentrification
How we develop infrastructure
Use native plants and green space, usable spaces

Table B3

Blighted thoroughfares / strip centers

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop
End-of-session top three concerns by table workgroup

More proactive role for city, incentives
Provide tools to focus on pedestrians / bikes
Mixed use in corridors should support adjacent neighborhoods

Table B4

Place types need to allow light manufacturing
New development on existing arterials
Bike connections
Let the market lead, respect rights of property owners

Table B5

Mobility: preservation of assets (neighborhoods, landmarks, wildlife, green space)
Mobility network must connect to activity nodes and natural corridors / places
Sustainability needs to be considered in all new projects, infrastructure life cycle (pedestrian friendly design, landscaping, flooding, housing durability, drainage-permeable surfaces)

Table B6

Connecting Houston's treasures
P&D should be flexible with ordinances for each area
Less focus on cars, instead focus on other forms of transportation
Places to lock up bikes at transit nodes

Table B7

Insure inter-generational, socio-economic diverse neighborhoods based on a variety of housing options. Diversity, rich and balanced
Respect ancestors and established culture of city, preserve the identity of our historic neighborhoods and increase amenities via mixed land use around educational centers
Make Houston a green city, respect pedestrians/bikes

Table C1

Multi-user streets
Increase mobility
Increase green space; save trees
Minimize transportation costs and energy use through enhanced public transit corridors

Table C2

Create place along transit – not just throughways – by making sidewalks accessible and pedestrian friendly and requiring street level retail in urban centers.
Invest in alternate transit systems – mass transit, complete, interconnected bike trails.
Preserve existing neighborhoods and strengthen guidelines for visual content of city such as signage and overhead power lines.

Table C3

Areas of change v. stability are difficult to determine
People in attendance do not reflect entire community – effected community needs to be a part of the process
Higher development standards through city policy/regulations

August 26, 2006 Community Workshop

End-of-session top three concerns by table workgroup

Table C4

Design & engineering of all infrastructure for transit

Preserve character of existing neighborhoods / affordable housing

Set guidelines that are specific to different communities

Table C5

More public places near destinations; good places for youth (other than bars) give options for activities

Neighborhood-friendly development; strong neighborhood preservation

Transit available for all (#1), key connectivity between lines – better unified system

Do away with cars

Marlene L. Gafrick
Director, City of Houston Planning and Development Department
Speaker's Notes
August 26, 2006 Community Workshop

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Good morning and welcome to the first in a series of events where we will be working together to plan for the future of Houston's urban neighborhoods. My name is Marlene Gafrick and I'm the Director of the City of Houston's Planning and Development Department. Thank you for taking time out of your Saturday morning to join us here at the George R. Brown Convention Center.

I'd like to thank three sponsors who have helped the Planning Department make today's event possible; the City of Houston's Convention and Entertainment Facilities Department for the use of the George R. Brown Convention Center, Central Houston and Aramark.

Houston, the city we all call home, continues to undergo dramatic growth and redevelopment. You see it as you drive through your neighborhood and on the way to work - new houses, redeveloped properties, expanding businesses, and more traffic. The result can be a significant change in the fabric of our existing neighborhoods, sometimes for better, sometimes not. This is particularly noticeable in the urban neighborhoods of the inner city and it is projected to continue into the foreseeable future.

The Houston-Galveston Area Council recently completed their Regional Growth Forecast which looks at population and employment projections through 2035 for the purpose of transportation and community planning. Their projections are in line with those done by other entities.

The 8-county region will see a population increase in the next 30 years of more than 3.5 million people with more than 2 million of that concentrated in Harris County. That's the equivalent of adding a second Houston to Harris County in the next 30 years. These 2 million new people will form an additional 835,000 households and they will add more than 1 million new jobs to our economy – a real benefit to us all. Our total population will reach 8,835,000 in the region with 5,840,000 in Harris County alone.

Houston is a young city and we have seen great spurts of growth in our past. We've learned there are three ways we can respond to growth. We can choose to *ignore it* and be driven along on its tide without direction. We can *fight it* and hope that its challenges are mysteriously diverted, a strategy that seldom works. Or, we can *harness the growth* and its opportunities to reshape our city and improve our quality of life. In Houston, we've shown that harnessing growth and change can reap big rewards.

Growing up always has its challenges. And when you're a big, spread-out city like we are, these challenges can be daunting. Our land area now encompasses 640 square miles – a huge area to serve. Let's put that into perspective. You can fit Baltimore, Boston, Cleveland, Denver, Miami, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, St. Louis and Washington, DC inside of our city limits and still have 18 square miles to spare.

A population comparison shows that the city populations of Atlanta, Sacramento, Boston, Orlando and Pittsburgh would all fit within our 2005 population of 2,016,582. When using other communities as examples, we need to keep this in mind.

Even with all of these people we still have plenty of room to fill in as a city. Approximately 25% of the available land within the city limits is undeveloped, and within the 610 loop about 17% is undeveloped. The inner city is already seeing a great deal of infill, leading to increases in property values and the creation higher-density development. This is a great opportunity for key parts of our community to mature.

M. Gafrick, continued . . .

Adding an additional 2 million people to our area is obviously going to put stress on services like police, fire and schools. It's going to challenge our water, sewer and drainage systems, our air quality and more. One of the biggest impacts will be on transportation. But this is also an area where some very interesting benefits can be derived as we look for opportunities to harness the growth.

We can grow in a manner that preserves the positive characteristics of our neighborhoods while improving the quality of life for current and future residents. We are here to discuss how our urban transit corridors can develop to achieve these goals because they are crucial to our future. We're going to ask some critical questions about the change and growth to come. What should it look like? Will it harm or help existing areas? What do we want to preserve and protect? What do we want to change or recreate? Together, let's take a proactive look at our future.

Marlene has painted the picture for us of what the future has in store. So how do we plan for this future? We could try to make a list of what we think should go where, but experience has shown that plans like this seldom see the light of day. Instead we have a different model to pursue – one that has served us well before.

The Houston that we walk and drive through each day – the built environment of our city - is the result of a set of policies, rules and regulations that dictate how we want our city to grow and develop. These rules lay out the width of streets and sidewalks, where curb cuts go for vehicle access, the distance buildings set back from the streets, how many parking spaces a business must have, what landscape elements must be added and much, much more. Each of these seems like a minor issue, but when taken in whole, they create the world we move through.

To most people these rules are invisible. But to the people that build our city, from homebuilders to developers and government agencies, these rules are the DNA of our community. If you remember from way back in Biology 101, or maybe more recently from watching a detective show on TV, DNA is the genetic instructions, or building blocks, for how our body grows. It determines what we will look like and how we will develop over time.

Like DNA, these seemingly unimportant rules and regulations dictate how our city will grow. While we can't change our DNA to get straighter teeth or longer legs, we can alter the DNA of our city to get better results. And that's just what we propose to do: to take a good look at our rules and see how we can improve them so that the Houston to be built in the future works better. Here's an example:

Prior to 1996 the city did not have landscaping requirements for new development. By modifying our rules, or DNA, to require landscaping we were able to create an enormous visual difference across Houston with each new development. It was so well received that Harris County has since adopted the same rule. And we all benefit from the beautification, cooling and increased walk-ability that these trees have added.

How was this accomplished? Not by creating a plan and saying we're going to put a tree here, here, and here. Instead, we changed the DNA of our city and the result was a different environment as the city continued to grow. That is exactly the formula we're going to focus on here today. In a city that's growing rapidly these improvements to our built environment occur with each new development.

It is possible for us to set new standards where urban development is occurring, such as in the six transit corridors. These can help to mitigate negative impacts of development while reshaping our communities in positive ways. Here is the process that we are undertaking, starting with this meeting today.

1. Phase 1 – Kick off workshop “building a great city”
2. Phase 2 – Corridor Community Workshops (2 rounds of workshops)
3. Phase 3 – Workshops at Planning Commission Mixed Use/Transit Development Committee

C. Lewis Continued . . .

Many of you may have participated in past planning activities such as Blueprint Houston or Envision Houston which dealt with our vision for the region and the city as a whole. This process will build on them and complement their work while focusing specifically on the six transit corridors. Likewise, this process will compliment the smaller area plans compiled by neighborhoods, management districts and other organizations.

I'm grateful that you are here this morning to lend your ideas and vision to this critical process.

Phase I Urban Corridors Plan Steering Committee

CM Anne Clutterbuck	District C
CM Ada Edwards	District D
CM Pam Holm	District G
CM Adrian Garcia	District H
CM Carol Alvarado	District I
CM Peter Brown	At large Position 1
John R. Breeding	Uptown Houston
Jamie Brewster	Houston Intown Chamber of Commerce
David Crossley	Gulf Coast Institute
Jack Drake	Greater Houston Partnership/Greater Greenspoint Management District
Robert M. Eury	Central Houston
Steve Flippo	Harris County Metropolitan Transit Authority
Reeves Gilmore	Harris County Public Infrastructure Department
Mary Margaret Hansen	Greater East End Management District
Bradshaw Hovey	Texas Southern University
Gabriel Johnson	Texas Department of Transportation
Jim Langford	Crescent Real Estate Equities Ltd/Greenway Plaza
Charles LeBlanc	Midtown Management District
Dr. Carol Lewis	Houston Planning Commission
Clark Martinson	Energy Corridor Management District
Todd A. Mason	Harris County Metropolitan Transit Authority
Jason McLemore	Greater Southeast Management District
Miki Milovanovic	Harris County Metropolitan Transit Authority
Carol W. Nixon	Texas Department of Transportation
Jane Page	Crescent Real Estate Equities Ltd.
Theola Petteway	OST/Alameda Corridors Redevelopment Authority
Carroll G. Robinson	Barbara Jordan Mickey Leeland School of Public Affairs
David Robinson	AIA Houston Chapter
Susan Rogers	University of Houston
Ian Rosenberg	Main Street Coalition
Anton Sinkewich	Central Houston
Jason Stuart	Urban Land Institute
Heidi Sweetnam	Blueprint Houston
Jeff Taebel	Houston Galveston Area Council
Joe Webb	Houston Intown Mobility Committee
Susan Young	South Main Center Association

